



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

TODD P. GRAVES

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow

OCTOBER 14, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LIBERTY WOMAN SENTENCED TO THREE YEARS, ORDERED TO PAY \$177,000 IN RESTITUTION FOR CREDIT CARD FRAUD, FORGERY

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Liberty, Mo., woman was sentenced in federal court today for illegally charging more than \$177,000 to her employer's credit cards and forging the business owner's name in an attempt to conceal the criminal activity.

Becky Puett, 44, of Liberty, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Howard F. Sachs this morning to two years in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered **Puett** to pay more than \$177,952.27 in restitution.

On April 28, 2005, **Puett** waived her right to a grand jury and pleaded guilty to a federal information, admitting to credit card fraud and forgery. By pleading guilty, **Puett** admitted that she produced and possessed forged checks written on the bank accounts of MGMCO, a consulting company that has contracts and affiliates in Missouri and other states. **Puett** admitted that she forged the signature of MGMCO's owner on those checks in order to pay credit card bills to American Express and Sprint credit card companies.

Puett was employed as an administrative assistant with MGMCO from August 1999 until January 2003. **Puett** was hired to assist the company's owner, whose health had diminished due to the combination of a heart attack and stroke. She had access to the owner's office, where he maintained his company records and personal financial information.

In her position, **Puett** was allowed access to two company American Express credit cards and, unknowingly to the owner, she obtained a Sprint MBNA Visa card and listed herself as an authorized cardholder and user. After obtaining the cards, **Puett** began making unauthorized purchases of personal items and services totaling approximately \$177,952.27. In order to conceal the criminal activity, **Puett** intercepted the credit card bills and issued checks payable to those

credit card companies, forging the owner's signature. The total of such checks amounted to \$43,438.26, Graves said.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney J. Daniel Stewart. It was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow